

contributed tremendously to a number of highly advanced projects.

Fiber Materials was established in the southern Maine town of Biddeford in 1969 and has become a global leader in the design, manufacture, and testing of a variety of advanced composites in its 40 years of operation. The company produces a wide range of materials, from carbon/carbon composites used in the construction of heatshields and missile nosetips, to quartz products designed for printed circuit boards or electrical and thermal insulation. Fiber Materials now employs roughly 180 employees at its facilities in Biddeford and Presque Isle, and its Space Technology Division in Columbus, OH.

Fiber Materials has earned a number of financial awards to fund the development of critical projects through the Small Business Innovation Research, or SBIR, program at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA. The SBIR program provides funding to small businesses with innovative, early stage ideas that align with the research and development goals of 11 different Federal agencies, including NASA, the Department of Defense, and the National Institutes of Health. One of the most recent systems that Fiber Materials contributed to under NASA's purview is ORION Launch Abort System, which will allow the crew to escape the spacecraft in the case of an emergency. The system was successfully tested in May 2010.

In recognition of Fiber Materials' dedicated efforts to NASA, the Johnson Space Center recently recognized the company with its 2010 Small Business Subcontractor of the Year Award. According to NASA's Office of Small Business Programs, the award acknowledges "successful and innovative practices that promote small business participation in the initiatives that NASA undertakes." Fiber Materials has been an invaluable resource to the Federal government from the beginning, and I commend the company for playing such an integral part in some of NASA's most critical initiatives.

Small businesses that are versatile and multifaceted such as Fiber Materials will be critical as the United States seeks to continue in its role as a world leader. Undoubtedly, participating in programs like SBIR will provide the company with countless additional opportunities to simultaneously contribute to NASA's mission and create jobs in Maine. I thank everyone at Fiber Materials for their strong work ethic, ingenuity, and dedication, and I wish them continued success in the years to come.●

#### TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN GEORGE M. VUJNOVICH

● Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I wish to honor an outstanding Serbian-American, Captain (Ret.) George M. Vujnovich, who was recently awarded the Bronze Star Medal, for his heroic actions during World War II.

The Bronze Star is awarded to military service personnel for bravery, acts of merit or meritorious service. When awarded for bravery, it is the fourth-highest combat award of the U.S. Armed Forces. Captain Vujnovich's determination to rescue and save the trapped airmen and subsequent participation in the planning and execution of Operation Halyard—resulted in one of the most successful air force rescue missions in history; and an operation so secret that the records were only declassified in 1997.

I was made aware of the Halyard Mission as a boy in 1946. I was in attendance at a social event in my parents' home to honor Captain Nick Lalich as one of the leaders who was part of the military team that parachuted into Serbia to execute and carry out Captain Vujnovich's plan to rescue and evacuate the airmen.

Captain Vujnovich served with the Office of Strategic Services; the predecessor of the modern Central Intelligence Agency, CIA, and the wartime organization charged with coordinating activities behind enemy lines for the branches of the U.S. military. Operation Halyard evolved in wake of the Allied bombing campaign to destroy Nazi Germany's vast network of petroleum resources in occupied Eastern Europe. The most vital target of bombing was the facilities located in Ploesti, Romania, which supplied 35 percent of Germany's wartime petroleum. Beginning in April 1944, bombers of the Fifteenth Allied Air Force began a relentless campaign to blast the heavily guarded facilities in Ploesti in an attempt to halt petroleum production altogether. By August, Ploesti was virtually destroyed—but at the cost of 350 bombers lost, with their crews either killed, captured, or missing in action.

The assault on Ploesti forced hundreds of Allied airmen to bail out over Nazi-occupied eastern Serbia, an area patrolled by the Allied-friendly Chetnik guerrilla army. When the Chetnik commander, General Draza Mihailovich, realized that Allied airmen were parachuting into his territory, he ordered his troops, as well as the local peasantry, to aid the aviators by taking them to Chetnik headquarters in Pranjani, Serbia for evacuation.

General Mihailovich's attempts to alert American authorities to the situation regrettably initially failed to produce action. Fortunately, fate would have it that when Mirjana Vujnovich, a Serb employee of the Yugoslav embassy in Washington, DC, heard of the trapped airmen, and immediately wrote to her husband, Captain Vujnovich, stationed in Bari, Italy. As an American, descending from Serb parents, Vujnovich knew the region intimately and also knew how to escape from Nazi-occupied territory: he had been a medical student in Belgrade when Yugoslavia fell to the Axis powers in 1941, and he and his wife spent months sneaking through minefields

and begging for visas before they finally escaped from Nazi-occupied Europe.

I was excited that someone with a name like mine was such a hero and was the genesis of my interest in Yugoslavia. In fact it left such an impression on me that my first paper in undergrad school was titled "How the U.S. sold out Yugoslavia at Yalta and Tehran".

Captain Vujnovich made it his personal crusade to get the airmen home. From the outset though, Operation Halyard encountered opposition from Allied leaders—from the U.S. State Department, from communist sympathizers in the British Special Operations Executive, SOE, even from British Prime Minister Winston Churchill himself. It was an operation that seemed condemned from the start, but Captain Vujnovich persevered rather than let the mission die. His persistence paid off. Even though the operation endured from August 9, 1944, through December 27, 1944, within only the first 2 days, Operation Halyard successfully retrieved 241 American and Allied airmen. By the time the Operation was officially ended, Vujnovich's team had airlifted 512 downed Allied airmen to safety without the loss of a single life or aircraft—a truly impressive accomplishment.

Captain George Vujnovich's recognition as a hero and valued asset to this country and the U.S. Air Force is long overdue. Frankly, had the records of the operation not remained sealed until 1997, I feel certain Captain Vujnovich would have received this honor years ago. Nevertheless, the decades do not and cannot diminish the valor and patriotism of this extraordinary man. I ask all my colleagues to join me now to honor this Serbian-American hero, to thank him for his dedicated service to our country and to congratulate him for winning the Bronze Star. Captain Vujnovich, I salute you.●

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

#### EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

(The nomination received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

#### MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 9:33 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by